

# University's priorities buried in the rubble

Dalhousie's ability to plan in terms of academia and physical structure should be seriously questioned at this time. The grandiose schemes that were hatched in the '60's seem slowly to be disintegrating as the bases of these plans are being proven faulty.

The symbol of Dalhousie's expansion, Dalhorizons, is running into roadblocks, but the administration continues to publicly deny that their plans are not progressing as scheduled.

Several years ago this fund-raising group drew up a list of building priorities which included an Athletic complex, a Physical Sciences building and a Dental building among others. Some others have already been built, like the Life Sciences and the Arts Centre. Most of the funds for these projects came from large companies and government subsidies. But now the university is in trouble.

A couple of years ago, the provincial government imposed a moratorium on building construction. At the same time, most universities in Canada began predicting enrollment decreases. And now it is becoming

more difficult to get money from the large corporations.

Dalhousie didn't listen. They are still predicting enrollment increases despite the fact that there was a significant drop this academic year, that is playing havoc with the budget.

Yet the university is still buying land for future construction projects.

But despite the public facade the university is constructing, it is becoming increasingly clear that it would be folly to budget for enrollment increases and at the same time budget for more construction. The fewer students at this university, the smaller the provincial grants.

The university's inability to plan effectively and beneficially for the university itself and the community as a whole is most evident now. They snapped up Fenwick Towers two years ago to allay a housing crisis. That cost \$5 million and now there are rumours that they'll get rid of it at the first opportunity.

In the past six months, houses on South Street and College Street have been demolished. To build the Athletic

Complex on South Street as planned, the building moratorium must have been lifted by December 31 in order to obtain a \$500,000 grant from an unidentified corporation. It was not lifted so there are empty lots and fewer places for people to live.

The houses on College were torn down despite the fact that no plans had been made for that space. It is now a parking lot. Apparently no attempts were made to obtain a long term loan from Central Mortgage and Housing under the National Housing Act to fix up the houses. The estimated cost of repairs of these places was only \$12,000 while demolition and gravel cost about

\$4,000.

The latest evidence of public money-grabbing came just before Christmas, when a large press conference was called to announce a \$225,000 grant from the Ford Foundation for a governmental studies "think-tank." All the local media were in attendance for the big announcement and if it hadn't been for bad weather or something, the Premier would have been there too.

Clearly this elaborate gathering was intended to give the impression that Dalhousie is still expanding at a fast rate, and that if the Ford Foundation recognizes Dalhousie University as a

fine institution, then it must be a fine institution.

The entire conference was misleading, both in terms of praising the unspecified research projects and in brightening an otherwise dark financial picture.

The university planning program in the past few years has been uninformed and misdirected and as a result, students and their education have been suffering at the expense of consolidating governmental and corporate connections.

The priority of a university is education for the benefit of the individual and the community. To date, this priority has been lost.

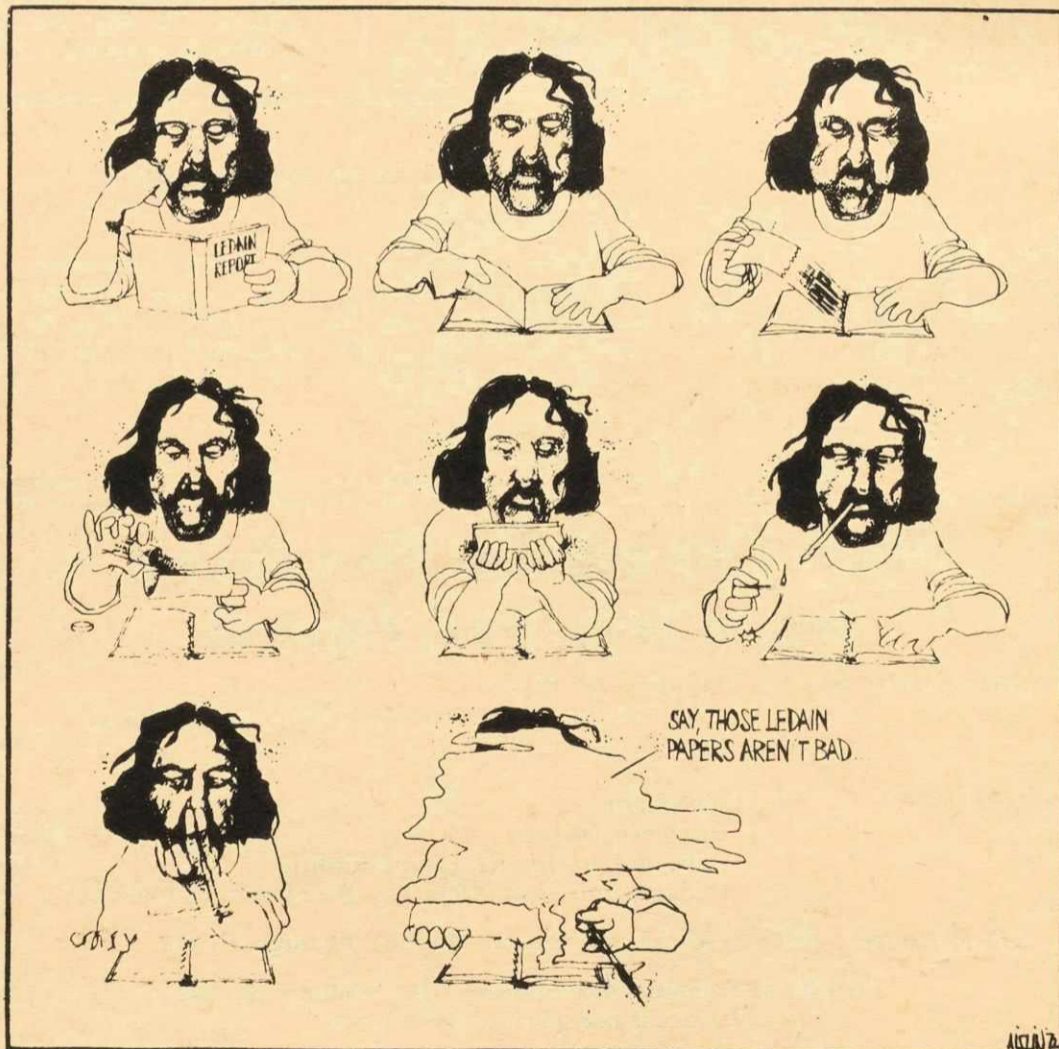
## The Dalhousie Gazette

### Canada's Oldest College Newspaper

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## Quote of the week

It may be that much of that knowledge is founded on fiction but the truth is that fiction itself is based on fact.

Halifax Chronicle-Herald  
January 6, 1973